

SPONGES FROM THE FLOODED SANDY BEACHES OF TWO AMAZONIAN CLEAR WATER RIVERS (PORIFERA)

KEYWORDS. Porifera, freshwater sponges, amazonian aquatic habitats.

SIOLI (1956) studied in detail the characteristics of the seasonally flooded areas along his proposed "clear water" type river in the Central Amazonia. He pointed out the remarkable abundance of fresh-water sponges incrusting the peculiar vegetation of the "igapós" (= floodplain lakes, JUNK & FURCH, 1985), or that along the white-sand beaches of those rivers. Rio Verde and Rio Tapajós are both clear water rivers (JUNK & FURCH, 1985).

The junior author sampled sponges along a stretch of the white-sand beach at the left margin of Rio Verde, close to its mouth in the Jamari River, Rondonia State, on November, 1988. The sponges incrusted pieces of bark or logs and branches left on the sand by the lowering waters as well as trunks of the trees along the forest/beach boundary. The specimens were identified as: *Trochospongilla pennsylvanica* (Potts, 1882) (MCN 1614, 1615, 1709, 1713, 2438, 2502, 2508, 2524, 2525, 2528, 2529, 2531, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574); *Metania fittkaui* Volkmer-Ribeiro, 1979 (MCN 1612, 1613, 1616, 1617, 1619, 1678, 1699, 1704, 1706, 1707, 1708, 1710, 1711, 1712, 2527, 2530); *Drulia uruguayensis* Bonetto & Ezcurra de Drago, 1968 (MCN 2569); *Spongilla spoliata* Volkmer-Ribeiro & Maciel, 1983 (MCN 1620, 1701, 2423, 2526, 2676).

The senior author sampled sponges from the "Praia Vermelha" and from Lago do Piranha, right margin of the Rio Tapajós at Alter do Chão, Pará State, on October 13, 1991. She also received specimens collected by Mr. Joaquim A. Andrade from Rio Tapajós, at Praia do Araróá, Santarém, Pará State, on October 13, 1991. At Praia Vermelha the sand takes on a red tint from the red-sandstone outcrop of Serie Barreiras which limits the beach inner side. At Praia Vermelha the sponges heavily incrust the branches and trunks of the sparse bushes and trees thriving on the sand (SIOLI, 1956, fig. 14 photographed this habitat). Some sponge crusts were also found on the outcrops of the red-sandstone inside the river. At Lago do Piranha a few specimens incrusted the shallow vegetation along the pond margins. The specimens from Praia da Areia Vermelha were identified as *Drulia cristata* (Weltner, 1895) (MCN 2080, 2081, 2348, 2349, 2353, 2420); *Corvospongilla seckti* Bonetto & Ezcurra de Drago, 1966 (MCN 2350, 2351); *Trochospongilla paulula* (Bowerbank, 1863) (MCN 2403, 2405, 2421, 2675); *Drulia uruguayensis* Bonetto & Ezcurra de Drago, 1968 (MCN 2079, 2352, 2404, 2412, 2422, 2429, 2575, 2577). The specimens from Praia do Araróá were identified as *Drulia cristata* (Weltner, 1895) (MCN 2400, 2401, 2417, 2418, 2419); *Corvospongilla seckti* Bonetto & Ezcurra de Drago, 1966 (MCN 2576, 2579); *Oncosclera spinifera* (Bonetto & Ezcurra de Drago, 1973) (MCN 2580); *Drulia uruguayensis* Bonetto & Ezcurra de Drago, 1968 (MCN 2425, 2428); *Spongilla spoliata* Volkmer - Ribeiro & Maciel, 1983 (MCN 2399, 2578, 2581). The specimens from Lago do Piranha were identified as *Trochospongilla paulula* (Bowerbank, 1863) (MCN 2402).

All the sampled specimens are deposited in the Porifera Collection of Museu de Ciências Naturais (MCN), Fundação Zoobotânica do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre.

Remarks: *D. cristata* remains as an endemic of the Rio Tapajós. This is the second register of the occurrence of this species which appeared as a clear dominant in the

sampled sites. *M. fittkauui* is registered for the first time for a river of the "clear water" category. It had been originally recorded only from small tributaries of the Rio Negro (a "black water" type river, JUNK & FURCH, 1985) close to its mouth in the Amazon. The same statement applies to *S. spoliata* which is now seen to range east to west of the Amazon Basin. On the other hand, *D. uruguayensis*, firstly registered from River Uruguay and next (EZCURRA-DE-DRAGO, 1975) for rivers in the Suriname is now seen to range from north to south of South America and from east to west of the Amazon Basin.

Illustrations for the listed species can be found in BONETTO & EZCURRA-DE-DRAGO (1966, 1968, 1973) for respectively, *C. seckti*, *D. uruguayensis* and *O. spinifera*; DE ROSA-BARBOSA (1980) for *D. cristata*; VOLKMER-RIBEIRO & COSTA (1992) for *M. fittkauui*; VOLKMER-RIBEIRO & DE-ROSA-BARBOSA (1985) for *T. paulula* and VOLKMER-RIBEIRO & MACIEL (1983) for *S. spoliata* and *T. pennsylvanica*.

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